

Canadian
Pamphlets

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Phipps, R.W.

To the electors of Ontario

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B. W. Phipps

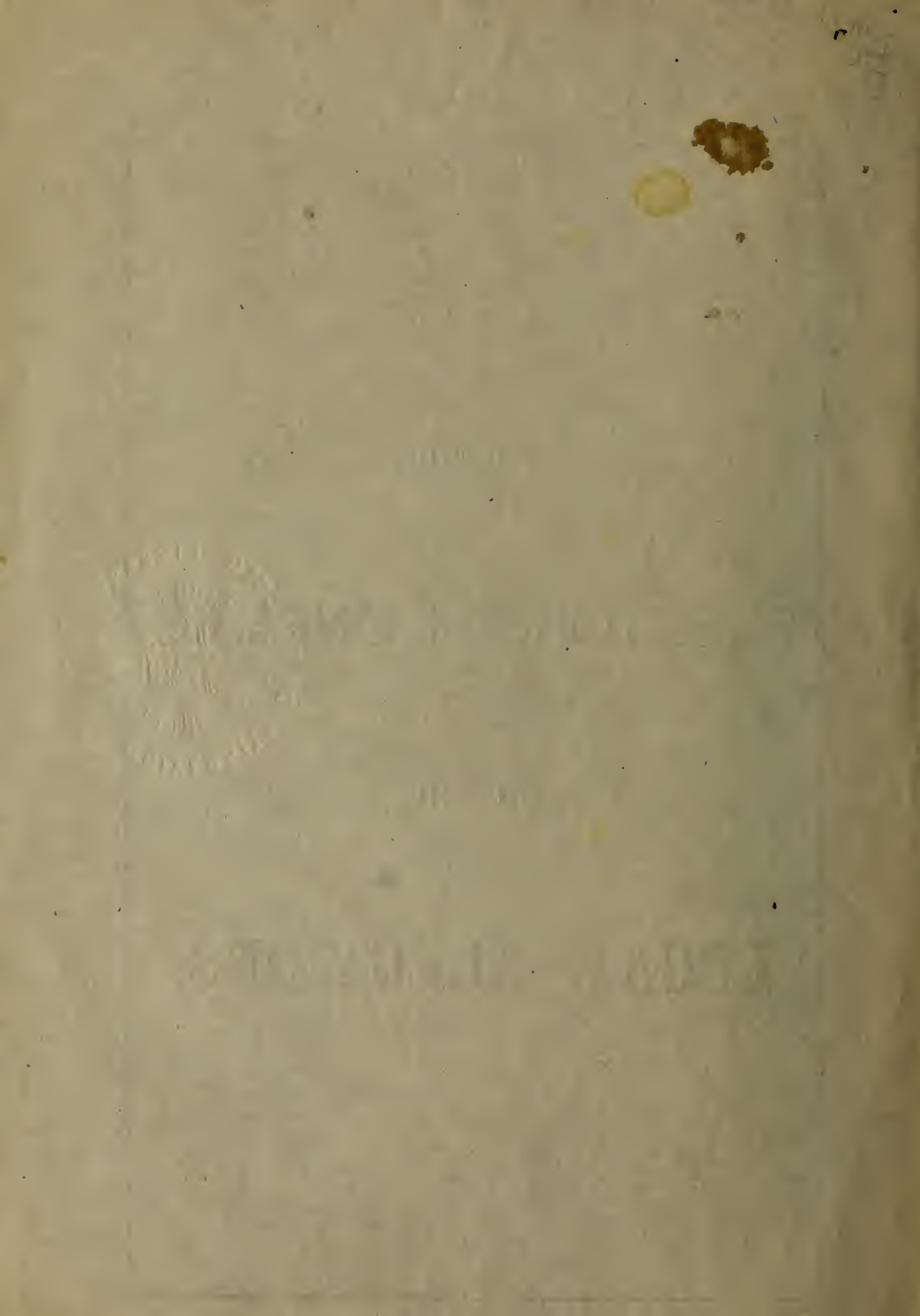
TO THE

ELECTORS of ONTARIO

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LOCAL ELECTIONS.



THE LOCAL ELECTIONS.

By R. W. PHIPPS.

I will ask the reader to peruse carefully the few pages which compose this little pamphlet. The type will be found large and clear, the statements plain and interesting, and the utmost pains taken that nothing untruthful, or in any way misleading, be stated. In the first place, a few words will be said on a question which is the cause of much curiosity and astonishment, and no little disappointment, at present, namely :

THE NATIONAL POLICY, AND WHY IT IS UNSUCCESSFUL.

Sir John Macdonald was not returned to power by Conservative voters alone. They did not, especially in Ontario, possess the numerical strength necessary to effect it. The Conservative members received a large vote from both parties on Protection and National Policy principles. It was well known that among his Protectionist supporters were men on whose honesty the country could rely, and the writings of such, largely circulated, were among the chief means by which his majorities were obtained. The country expected that he would continue to retain the assistance of these men in carrying out their policy, and that the new Government would be therefore rather a Protectionist than a Conservative one. Thus he received, undoubtedly, a very large Reform vote. I myself, having been of assistance to

him in the matter, demanded, on the elections being won, that the Protectionists should be represented in the Cabinet, declaring that the old Conservative leaders were unable to carry out alone a policy which had never been theirs, and which, though they had advocated, they did not understand. This was refused, and the ring of old gentlemen who were considered Conservative leaders determined to carry out Protection themselves. Knowing little of the matter, they have had to accept instruction from our present manufacturers, and have, in fact, kept the Secretary of the Manufacturers' Association at Ottawa ever since as one of their chief advisers. Now the National Policy was based on the intention of bringing a large number of manufacturers here. On the other hand it is the interest of our present manufacturers that these men should be a very long time getting here. Again, the National Policy intended the development of the large iron and other mines of Canada. The present manufacturers do not wish this, wanting to get their raw material cheap from outside, and sell it dear inside. Our present manufacturers, therefore, are not safe advisers—their interest is a monopoly interregnum of as many years as possible, before competing manufacturers come in; and this can be easily managed for them by a Government acting by their instructions. This is the cause of the delay where you justly expected speed—of the continued dulness where you justly expected prosperity. A competent Government need neither ask their advice nor follow it. Such a one you would have had, had the Protectionists had a chance. As to the other parts of the National Policy as originally planned—the settlement of the great North-West, the development of our internal navigation, with many other important parts of the scheme—it is evident (from the wild and foolish plans being introduced for the Pacific Railway completion, which will simply throw most of our valuable territory into the hands of great land monopolies) that neither Dr. Tupper nor the rest of the ministry know anything about them. Therefore, to close this part of the statement, I say to the electors: You are under a Conservative Government and under a Manufacturers' Government, but you are not under a National Policy Government, nor are you, therefore, getting the benefits which such a one would have intro-

duced. Had the National Policy scheme been carried out, business would have been brisk, money plenty, wages high and times good, over all Canada these four months. As it is, we have not got prosperity; we are not likely to get it, nor will we, I firmly believe, till the incapable gentlemen in charge be deprived of power, and a genuine National Policy Government introduced.

THE COMING LOCAL ONTARIO ELECTIONS.

As the Conservatives did not get their majorities solely by Conservative, but also by Reform and Protective assistance, it is probable that the old Reform ascendancy will be maintained throughout Ontario in these elections. It is well that this should be so—for to the Reform party Ontario owes her liberties. But for them, one dominant Church would have still been in sole possession of and maintained by a large portion of our best lands; we should have been still ruled by Lower Canada votes; not one of the useful measures passed since Confederation, such as the purity of election laws, the vote by ballot, &c., would have been obtained; nor should we have that most important right of all, the right in our own Local Legislature to manage our own local affairs.

THE MOWAT GOVERNMENT.

I will now speak of the manner in which the Mowat Administration have conducted our local affairs, and the necessity for continuing them in power. As you are all aware, there has been for several years great commercial depression throughout all the world. It has been observed that Ontario, in spite of this, has made progress. This has been mainly in consequence of the large amount of money our Local Government has spent here, and the useful manner in which they have employed it. The income of Ontario is much more than is needed for the mere ordinary purposes of government; and this had accumulated a surplus under Mr. Sandfield Macdonald's Government of some seven millions of dollars, added to every year since, of course, by the overplus of the year. Mr. Mowat's Administration have employed it for the benefit of the country in various ways.

For instance, they have paid out over three millions in a distribution to the various municipalities, which these have employed in making roads, building bridges, town halls, school houses, making harbors, constructing water-works, and for many other useful purposes, all over the country. Consider what a vast sum this is—three millions—thirty hundred thousand dollars—how much work it must have given, and how many valuable improvements.

This is little compared to the manner in which they have aided railways. Government has given these direct assistance to the amount of nearly three millions of dollars. And notice the additional result. Municipalities have given seven millions in bonuses, and the total sums spent on these roads has been about twenty-three millions. Think of what an amount of work and improvement this shows. They have aided nearly thirty different lines, having nearly fourteen hundred miles built and three hundred to finish yet. And if you look at any map of Ontario, you will see that it is so crossed and counter-crossed by these lines that most parts have got a share.

Next, I want you to consider the quantity of money spent in public buildings and works, and the valuable improvements obtained for the money: all this, remember, since 1871. They have spent about two and a quarter millions in building asylums, prisons, reformatories, registry offices, agricultural colleges, Government schools, in improvements on lakes and rivers, and for many other valuable objects. We have, in consequence, now schools at which agriculture is scientifically taught to our young farmers—(an excellent work, since modern farming to be successful must be scientific). We have reformatories, where young culprits may be reclaimed, instead of, as of old, sending them to prisons to become yet worse. We have asylums where the lunatic, the blind, deaf and dumb are kept, and often cured—a great improvement on past times, which left them often necessarily uncared for, an annoyance and alarm to neighborhoods.

Government has spent also nearly half a million on the drainage of farms, lending the farmers the money at low interest. I wish that I had space here to say a few words on the value of this improvement. It is of very great importance

indeed, and will yearly become, under good government, more extended and valuable. Let me say that it serves two purposes—one, well understood, the drying of wet lands; the other, perhaps still more useful, the softening and enriching of hard clay lands, of which Ontario has much—land apparently dry but apt to “bake.”

I will also say a word on what I—myself an old settler in by-gone days—would like well to say more on—our progress in backwoods clearing. As you know, Ontario has no longer her vast blocks of rich land, covered with solid beech and maple. These have been mostly occupied, but we have still a vast governmental territory, with a great deal of very good land here and there—land which in Europe would yield high rents. Government is doing much to explore and settle this. They have spent nearly three-quarters of a million on what we call colonization roads, piercing these wildernesses in all directions. Over a thousand miles of these have been made since 1871. This represents a vast amount of settlement—of cleared townships—farms where forest was—villages where had been no inhabitant.

In the matter of education much has been spent, and much secured in return. Since 1871 there has been spent on common and separate schools, high schools, collegiate institutes, libraries, maps, &c., over two and three-quarter millions of dollars. For this, matters are so arranged that now every child in the land can, free of charge, obtain an education which twenty or thirty years ago none but the rich could secure.

Altogether, it is calculated that—of matters which might rank as surplus distribution, things which, if the government had kept its surplus cash in the bank, it might have avoided paying, or to a great extent avoided—there have been nearly eighteen millions of dollars spent in Ontario since 1871, which, added to the railway expenditure encouraged and often produced by government aid, give the vast amount of forty millions of dollars spent in Ontario during the last few years—an expenditure the most opportune and most beneficial, diffusing money at the best time for the workmen and the best time for obtaining value in the work, of any recorded, perhaps in American—certainly in Canadian—history.

I would ask you to consider what has been the result of all this. The whole Province has been so chequered by railways that most farmers are near them, while macadamized, gravel, and graded roads connect in all directions. We have a far larger number of schools, and they are each far more efficient than the old ones. We have added to the Province as it was in '71 a newer belt of cleared farms along all its northern border. Many and costly reformatory, prison, refuge and asylum buildings have been erected. Villages are towns, and towns cities. (Think of Toronto as it was ten years back : it seems more than double now.) Population and wealth, business and revenue are much greater. Spite of the depression, Ontario's yearly imports and exports are over twenty millions more now than ten years ago. In fact, any one going through the Province could not fail to see we are much better off now. This is not the result of good crops or high prices—they have been rare. The Province for the last few years may be compared to a farmer who, finding little sale for his crops—and poor growing seasons—devotes most of his energies to improving his farm buildings, his drainage and fencing. His farm is then more valuable, and when good farming seasons return will be doubly as valuable. That is what Ontario, through what appears to me, after a good deal of investigation, to be a decidedly honest and capable government, has been doing. When the good times return we shall find the profit of our improvements. And remember, we have not gone one cent into debt ; but, on the contrary, have still a surplus of some four or five millions left. For this fact, without asking any other evidence, or holding a commission or audit to audit our auditors, we have Mr. Mowat's personal word—the word of a good lawyer and an honest man. I am sure you must recognize the value of having in such a position a man of whom we can say as much ; nor can you be unaware of the lack of patriotism of many,—of the contemptible personal motives of many—who, knowing how few his equal we have had in office in Canada, would try to drive him from power. I trust well it is impossible they can succeed.

I wish to remark here that all this is that increase of expenditure to which the opponents of the Mowat Government pretend

to object. It is only a pretence. These very opponents demanded the same course—the only proper one. Had Government chosen, the whole expense could have been reduced below even Sandfield Macdonald's mark. They might have kept the cash in hand, and not assisted the people—might have merely attended to the business of legislation and administration, left as much as possible on the counties, and had much less expense and labour. But in that case, every county, township, and riding would have been put to much greater expense for schools, for law, for roads, for asylums, for prisons. And all this they must have met by direct taxation on their own assessment roll every year. Would they be consoled for this by the knowledge that government still had cash on hand which would do some day for their children? They would think it very ill saved. Well, this is simply the meaning of the cry of increased expense the Opposition raises. Government has taken on itself much expenditure out of its own income, which otherwise the counties, towns and cities must do for themselves, or do—very badly—without it.

The present Administration has done, undoubtedly, valuable work for the country, work which, if I am not mistaken, the Opposition could not have done, certainly not with such ability. They have settled the boundary question, thus giving us another territory in the North-West as large as the Ontario we before possessed—a territory containing much valuable timber where timber is most valuable, on the road to the pineless prairies—containing also many large lakes and rivers, and having great mineral and agricultural resources. They have consolidated the Statutes, a work of much labour, and a work which saves expense to every suitor at law. They have increased the representation where needed, and it is a proof of their honesty that they gave members principally to Opposition districts, which returned Oppositionists before, and have since returned additional ones. They have introduced the vote by ballot, which is working well, and have passed an act concerning voters' lists, which has been of good service and will be of more. They have repealed the stamp duties in the Division and County Courts, and provided for the payment of witnesses in criminal cases, which you all know was much wanted. They have also passed laws to secure titles to property after certain years, to prevent insurance companies avoiding payment, and to give mechanics a lien on the property they benefit by their labour—all acts much needed. But I have not space for the detail of all, and simply may remark that many other valuable acts were passed by them.

If you take the list of your own municipal expenses throughout Canada for the past eight years, and you will find that the average increase in the whole has been 87 per cent., while your local governmental increase has been but 32 per cent., showing more economy in governmental increases than in municipal ones. And the fact is we have had an economical government, and should recognize it as such. It is not often we have such in Canada.

Now, concerning these expenditures, I want to make you two little statements of considerable interest. The first is, that by either their opponents' or the Government figures there has been no increase whatever in the total expenditure since 1873—Mr Mowat's first year. That year stood \$2,940,000; 1879 stands \$2,902,000, counting everything, surplus, distribution, and all. And, noticing what has been paid out of the surplus, and deducting it, you will find that every year of his *regime* shows a decrease on the first. So much for Mr. Mowat's increased expenditure.

Here are the full and plain expenditures under the Supply Bill (meaning without the surplus expenditure), certified by the Provincial Auditor :

1873.	1874.	1875.	1876.	1877.	1878.
\$2,460,000	\$2,342,000	\$2,063,000	\$2,155,000	\$2,363,000	\$2,408,000

Now consider the increased work in some departments: In the Secretary's Department, letters, references, reports, returns, circulars, licenses, &c., have swelled in six years from 4,000 to 36,000 annually; in the Administration of Justice Audit, from 5,000 to 35,000; in the Treasury Department, from 9,000 to 21,000; in the Attorney General's Department (many being files), from 1,400 to 7,000. Total, from 19,000 to 99,000. I am sure you must allow that, with this increase of work, and necessarily paying more clerks and higher salaries to get it done, Mr. Mowat must have economized very closely in some Departments to keep the totals so near their original level. I doubt very much if there is a government in America whose people have in the last six years been engaged in improvements as we have, can show anything like so non-increasing a supply bill.

Second: Remark what we really pay for our Local Government. We were by census in 1870, 1,620,000 people: probably now about two millions. The expenditure is, surplus and all, about three millions of dollars. So, even spending on works, &c., as we do, the whole cost to each of us is a dollar and a half a head—without the surplus spending it would be less than a

dollar. Compare this with the expenditure of Toronto—fifteen or sixteen dollars per head per year. Perhaps I may mention here that there is no fear of direct taxation for Local Government purposes. That is a cry got up by those who would like to have it all at Ottawa again, to treat us as they used to. Our subsidy from the Dominion purse annually is a million and a third. Our other receipts generally raise it to two and a half or three millions. But remember this.—If we chose to confine ourselves to mere ordinary governmental expenses, the Dominion subsidy would more than cover all.

THE INCAPACITY OF THE OPPOSITION.

If Government are not sustained, who will get in? Perhaps one of the least competent Oppositions which has sat in a Canadian Parliament. It cannot, I think, be fairly said that any one of them has ever been able to take up any question and handle it in a manner which proved himself so capable, and the Government so mistaken, as to influence popular feeling largely in his own favor. They have abused the Government in meaningless speeches, but have never been able to show what better they could have done. They speak against what has done the country good—the increased expenditure—but when brought, to the point they could but suggest some very small economies, and these such as conclusively proved themselves unable to handle such matters, or reason soundly on them. In all our expenditure of three millions they only proposed one or two per cent. reductions, and those ridiculous ones. They actually proposed to reduce the emigration grant by doing without our agents here, who send the labor to the farmer as it arrives—thus proposing to bring men here and then leave them to hang round the towns in poverty—the very evil most complained of. They proposed to abolish the insurance on our public buildings—a thing, considering the unavoidable insecurity of some of them, very unwise. They proposed to reduce many official salaries ten per cent., which would have saved \$16,000, lost us the services of many of our trained employees, by whose competence and honesty we can alone hope to manage rightly our large expenditure, and filled their places with cheap and perhaps dishonest men, who would have lost us more in a day than the salary reductions saved in a year. This is really about all they have found to propose. When they got a committee to investigate something they declared a great over-expenditure, it proved, as in the case of the Government House fence, that the work was cheap enough, while the useless committee cost more than the alleged over-outlay. One of their leaders, Mr. Morris, coming here with a flourish of trumpets to set things right, has had a whole session in which to speak, has had the party newspapers and the public halls at his hand, and has never used one of these opportunities to bring forward any plan of improvement—or, indeed, any plan at all. Another leader, Mr. Meredith, goes round the country praising the Dominion leaders, and declaring none should speak against them, caring nothing for the fact that bringing the whole Pacific Scandal Cabinet back at the first chance

was the most unwise political action ever committed in Canada, and that, in speaking as he does, he is practically telling the people it is right in sworn Crown advisers to accept large sums for election purposes, and promise contracts. What could we expect, when the Opposition leader makes it his business, and goes out of his way, to praise the doers of such actions, but that if the Opposition he leads get charge of our revenues, they will follow the example he praises? In the matter of their own salaries, a matter where, if they had the public spirit they claim, it would have shown itself, what did they do? Asked the Government to increase them—a majority of the Opposition two years successively voting for the increase—and now declare the Government responsible, and try to make political capital against them out of the very act they themselves desired, approved, and shared in the gain of. If this Opposition be returned to power, all future Oppositions in Ontario may say to one another, “Do not try to be competent, economic, useful to the Province, able in debate, or sound in judgment; that is not what Ontario people like, for, remember, they put Mr. Meredith’s followers in power for no discoverable reason except that they evidently possessed far less of these qualities than did their opponents.”

THE WEAK ATTACK OF GOLDWIN SMITH.

Two men have attacked the Government—Senator Macpherson, a man of business, and Prof. Goldwin Smith, a man of letters—of many letters. Place for the stranger; we will hear Mr. Smith first. He is one of the most powerful writers in the world. I have never known a weak point of his opponent to escape him. If there were one solitary iota against the Local Government he would have stated it most forcibly. But what does he do? He writes a letter of a whole column, evidently intending to do his best against Mr. Mowat’s Administration, but can neither make one charge against it, nor say one word in favor of its opponents. Now, doing his best, what is the only real point he makes, his only ground of accusation, his only and sole weapon? Just this, that endorsing Mowat will be endorsing Free Trade, because Mr. Mowat and others of his colleagues last election spoke, as they had a perfect right to do, their opinions in favor of Mr. Mackenzie’s tariff system, and that they will oppose Protection if they can. Therefore we are to turn out capable men from managing our local affairs, put in those whom the Professor does not say are capable, and possibly suffer the loss of millions of money, and the disrepute of our whole local system, lest the Local Government should oppose the new tariff system, a thing they have no possible means of doing. After this the Professor may say to an applicant for a footman’s place, “You don’t know Greek, and I do. Though I don’t know how it can possibly interfere with me, nor how you could do it, yet if you were to put a stone on the track of my Grecian studies, it might—indeed I don’t know exactly what it might. Good morning.” Well, he thinks the elections will turn on the National Policy. That is to say that because a great number of Reformers voted against a Reform Government when they differed from it on the great question of Protection, they will vote against one when they do not differ from it at all. It is to say

that if a man step out into the mud to pick up a guinea there, he will step into it again when he knows there is no guinea there. What is to be hoped and expected is that the local elections will be decided in accordance with the merits of the Local Government and the lack of merit of the Local Opposition.

THE WEAK ATTACK OF SENATOR MACPHERSON.

Then comes the Senator with a pamphlet. When you have measured him by a rule I will give you, you will see how little there is to be said from a business man's stand against Mr. Mowat. The pamphlet is worthless. I will show you three points proving this. First—He prints a long table of figures he knows most people will skip. Then he says, "You see this proves 260 per cent. increase in the expenditure." It does not. His own figures do not; they show 160 per cent. increase, counting all the surplus spending, but the Senator adds the increase to the sum increased, and calls it all increase. This is an untrue statement. Next, read his comments; you will find nothing but spiteful suppositions of evil all through; not one solid charge, much less proof of one. Third—In conclusion he says we have a deficit every year. He gets it by adding what we are spending of the surplus to our ordinary expenditure, and taking the ordinary receipts from the sum. Now notice that if we were so rich as to have a hundred millions of old surplus to spend on improvements each year, by his plan we would find nearly a hundred millions deficit each year. In fact he would prove that the richer we were the poorer we were. Now this shows plainly that there is nothing to say against the Mowat Administration in matters of economy or finance, for if there were this gentleman, used to figures all his life, would have found it out and exposed it. The fact is, as I told you, the Mowat Government has been careful and economical beyond most others, while these gentlemen, both of them violent abusers of partyism, take a stand against it on pure party grounds. No other. For, both men of ability, they compass sea and land to show some cause why we should change the Government, and utterly fail to produce one vestige of proof in support of their case. If not for partyism, why should they take these pains against an evidently honest government?

THE ABOLITION OF THE LOCAL LEGISLATURES DESIRED.

It has often been declared that prominent Conservatives have long desired the abolition of the Local Legislatures. The indications of present hostility are also plain. No more distinct attack on our Provincial independence could be made than the Letellier affair, in which, spite of the fact that the matter was one purely local to Quebec Province, and that Governor Letellier's action has been endorsed by the people of that Province, Sir John Macdonald proposes to deprive him ignominiously of office for an act which, besides that endorsal, received that of the previous Dominion Parliament. If this were permitted, Local Governments will exist but in name, the mere shadows of Ottawa; and then it indeed may well be said there, "Oh, the things are mere Ottawa bureaux now, we control them here; do away with them." This Letellier stroke is the

first tap to the wedge. And then come back, it is hoped, I fancy, some approach to the old times, when for many years our Upper Canada representatives were completely ignored, the majority of outside votes—you remember Mr. Cartier's "Call in de members?"—managing, or rather mismanaging, all our local business for us. But for that Ontario would, twenty years back, have thriven as she has since she broke loose. They deny this intention. But do their actions deny it? What does it mean that Sir John Macdonald refuses to ratify the award of the territory given Ontario to the west, if he be not jealous of Ontario's progress? What did Mr. Morris say the other night at the Amphitheatre: "Oh, the reason it's delayed, it's got into some pigeon-hole; Ontario boundary is quite safe in his hands." The trouble is to get it out of his hands. But I want you to observe that Mr. Morris considers it little that the most important matter to Ontario for years should be tossed carelessly into some pigeon-hole. No consequence. Only an Ontario matter; any time will do. True reflection of the old days. And notice: Mr. Morris considers that, when Mr. Fraser speaks of Ontario finding it her duty—as it is her duty—to protest against this infraction of Provincial rights, he enunciates a "dangerous doctrine." The very words of the old tyrannies. Not a right of the people but was once described as "dangerous doctrine." But I point out to you that the Conservative party are to-day in this position. They say that whether Provincial Parliament support their local Governors or no, the Ottawa Government may dismiss them if they choose, and on points so doubtful that former Dominion Parliaments have held contrary views. This means Ottawa dictation to Provincial Parliaments—no more nor less. If they have the Governor at their order, they can influence the policy at their will. There are no two ways—no right and left course. If the Conservatives had desired the continuance of Provincial jurisdiction, they never would have voted to destroy its independent action.

WEAK ATTACKS BY THE STUMP SPEAKERS.

If you examine the few complaints the Opposition stump speakers make, you will find them either trifling or ill founded. In fact no Canadian Opposition were ever at such a loss for want of grievances. Complaints that Sandfield Macdonald was ill-treated really seem to be their chief item, an item disproved by facts. And, if facts alone be taken, there seems little or nothing else.

CONCLUSION.

For all these reasons I should press on all Ontario voters—whether town or country—to support the Reform candidates in this Local Election. As for Protection issues, they have nothing to do here. Neither Reform nor Conservative candidates have any monopoly of Protective ideas. I consider the feeling and course of the world so strongly in favor of protection of home industries that in a few years no candidate will think of such a thing as avowing himself a Free Trader. But I say the present men are so spoiling the job of Protection that, if their Administration complete its term, Protection will be unfairly discredited here

for years, for a failure committed in its name, but for which responsibility it had none. I say they have not given you a policy of Protection, but of Extortion; that instead of the National Policy they have given you a National Humbug. For if Sir John had not, on attaining power, cast from him every man who could have helped him, and formed his Cabinet of men who could not, and who have not, you would have seen around you to-day the signs of prosperity on every side. What was said in Parliament? Mr. Casey said; "You rejected the Protectionists from your Cabinet, and came to the sea-side for a man who for years had made it his boast that he was the champion Free Trader of the Dominion." I ask you, Canadians, whether Reform or Conservative, is it fair to blame Protection for failure when placed in such hands? I ask you to remember that, just after the elections, when by remaining silent I might have easily had good place and salary, I publicly warned you that what has happened would happen if the National Policy were placed in incapable or hostile hands. And I ask you to look round now, and see if every prediction is not verified.

The issue here to-day is of other matters. You are asked, I again say, to reject men who have managed your local affairs more economically, more successfully, more beneficially, than any government in Canada, and few in the States, have succeeded in doing. You are asked to place in their stead men who have given few proofs of competence, and many of incompetence. I trust you will, however, show by your votes that these things have not escaped you unappreciated, but that you recognize the merits of the men who have honestly toiled in your service, who have done the country much solid good, and are likely, if given the opportunity, to do it much more.

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